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SIPDIS
TELEGRAM

June 23, 2003

To: No Action Addressee
Action: Unknown
From: AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI (ABU DHABI 2988 - UNKNOWN)
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, PARM, ETTC
Captions: None
Subject: U/S BOLTON DISCUSSES NORTH KOREAN AND IRANIAN NUCLEAR
THREAT WITH MFA MINSTATE HAMDAN BIN ZAYID
Ref: None

S E C R E T ABU DHABI 02988

SIPDIS
CXABU:
ACTION: POL
INFO: RSO P/M ECON AMB DCM

DISSEMINATION: POL
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: AMB:MMWAHBA
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CLEARED: A/DCM:TEWILLIAMS

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FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0562
INFO RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC//OSD/NESA//
RUCAACC/USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL//POLAD/CCJ2/CCJ5//
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 ABU DHABI 002988

SIPDIS

STATE FOR T, PM/B, NEA/ARP, NEA/NGA AND EAP/K

NSC FOR THEROUX

DOD FOR OSD/ISA/NESA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/21/13
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PARM](#) [ETTC](#) [IR](#) [NK](#) [TC](#)
SUBJECT: U/S BOLTON DISCUSSES NORTH KOREAN AND
IRANIAN NUCLEAR THREAT WITH MFA
MINSTATE HAMDAN BIN ZAYID

1. (U) Classified by Ambassador Marcelle M. Wahba
for reasons 1.5 (B) and (D).

2. (S) SUMMARY: Conveying a message from President
Bush, U/S Bolton laid out USG concerns on the

nuclear weapons programs of both North Korea and Iran in a June 18 meeting with MFA Minstate Hamdan bin Zayid. In the case of North Korea, U/S Bolton asked for the UAE's support in denying hard currency to the regime by helping us curtail DPRK weapons sales which could fund their nuclear program. Hamdan expressed his deep appreciation for U/S Bolton's visit, noting that the U.S. and the UAE have a "special" relationship which has been significantly strengthened in the post-9/11 period. Hamdan pledged the UAE's complete cooperation in deterring the North Korean and Iranian threats as these countries' programs endangered not only the Middle East region but the world. He cited UAE intelligence reports that the Iranians have recently redoubled their efforts and are "working more actively" on a nuclear program, particularly following U.S. and European expressions of concern. The UAE had raised its concerns about Iranian-Russian cooperation with the GOR directly but did not buy Moscow's argument that the Iranians are not pursuing this technology for military purposes. Hamdan also promised his personal engagement in obtaining an early signing of a bilateral ICC Article 98 agreement (see septel). END SUMMARY.

13. (S) Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Assistance John R. Bolton met with UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Shaykh Hamdan bin Zayid Al-Nahyan June 18 in Abu Dhabi. Bolton was joined by the Ambassador, Special Assistant Mark Groombridge, Foreign Affairs Officer Jodi Greene and Polchief (notetaker). Hamdan was joined by office assistant Abdulrahman Al-Romaithi and Presidential translator Zaki Nusseibeh.

U/S BOLTON ON NORTH KOREA: TIME IS NOT ON OUR SIDE

14. (S) U/S Bolton began with North Korea, laying out USG concerns about its dramatically increasing nuclear weapons capability. President Bush had instructed the State Department to find a peaceful solution to the crisis, using multilateral conferences, the UNSC and North Korea's neighbors. However, Bolton explained, diplomacy is a complex process and "time is not on our side." The President has decided that we must examine other "influences" in order to slow down the North Korean program. The USG's judgment is that the North is supporting its hard currency earnings via sales of WMD material and equipment, as well as drugs and gambling enterprises. U/S Bolton explained that his unpublicized trip to the ME region, with stops in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Kuwait, provided an opportunity to discuss our concerns with friends and to work together to cut off North Korea's external earnings. We wished to create a "partnership" so that countries in the ME region would look elsewhere than North Korea to fulfill their legitimate weapons needs. U/S Bolton made clear that we were not attempting to revisit the issue of past transactions and that we appreciated the UAE's termination of their military cooperation with the DPRK in 2000.

15. (S) Bolton sought UAE engagement with Iran and Libya where the U.S. does not have formal relations and with Syria, with whom we do have diplomatic ties, but where we have not been able to exercise much influence. The U/S offered to share intelligence as part of our counter-terrorism cooperation on transshipments, noting that the North Koreans typically sell components via clandestine means, including smuggling. Bolton

briefed Hamdan on the President's Proliferation Security Initiative, unveiled in Krakow in late May, in which the U.S. seeks to use existing and new authorities to go beyond traditional export control mechanisms to interdict shipments of WMD on sea, air and land. The U.S. wants to make it harder for the North Koreans and others to complete these transactions by dramatically increasing the costs of doing business.

HAMDAN: NORTH KOREA AN EXAMPLE TO ROGUE ACTORS

¶6. (S) Hamdan began by noting that the UAE does not have a diplomatic relationship with North Korea and is fully committed to cooperation with the U.S. with regard to the nuclear threat. Any weapons proliferation in Asia poses a "direct threat to the national security of the UAE," the MFA Minstate continued. In his view, how we deal with North Korea will determine whether other rogue actors will seek to develop dangerous weapons programs. Noting U/S Bolton's earlier meeting with Dubai Ports and Customs Authority Executive Director Sultan bin Sulayem (septel), Hamdan asked if the U.S. had particular concerns about Dubai as a transshipment point. He noted that the UAE federal government would raise such issues with Dubai Crown Prince Muhammad bin Rashid Al-Maktoum if necessary. U/S Bolton believed that Dubai was "doing the right thing" by seeking training for their customs officials in order to alert them to possible WMD shipments. The U.S. looked forward to sharing more information with Dubai, the U/S continued, particularly as those who traffic in WMD are getting increasingly sophisticated.

¶7. (S) Hamdan doubted whether the UAE alone could exert much influence on the Libyans, Syrians and Iranians, given their recalcitrant and secretive nature. He did not believe these governments would be responsive to any approaches regarding their dealings with North Korea. Bolton suggested that the UAE use its leadership in multilateral forums, such as the OIC, GCC and Arab League to express these concerns.

IRAN: MULTILATERAL EFFORTS KEY TO STOPPING PROGRAM

¶8. (S) U/S Bolton contrasted the close consultation between the U.S., the UK and France on the threat posed by Iran with that on Iraq. Pointing to the last G-8 statement, he noted there is some evidence that the Europeans are equally concerned. Bolton explained the U.S. desire to keep Russia and France "close to us" on Iran. Tehran's story that it is developing a civilian nuclear energy program is not consistent with its behavior. The U.S. believed that if Iran continues at the present rate, it will be able to produce nuclear weapons by the end of the decade. The U.S., he continued, has worked hard with Russia to stop the supply of fuel to the Bushehr facility. We've made some progress with the GOR, but not with regard to the private Russian scientists working with the Iranians. Putin had pledged to the President that the GOR would not supply fuel to Bushehr until questions regarding Iran's intentions are resolved.

¶9. (S) U/S Bolton noted the "devastating" IAEA report which was important as it represented an international, not just a U.S., assessment and laid out a range of unanswered questions that the Iranians are refusing to answer, including why Iran is developing a heavy-water production facility.

Bolton said the U.S. hoped the upcoming IAEA Board of Governors' meeting to be chaired by Kuwait will reflect consensus and call on Iran to open up to inspections. It is the U.S. view that Iran will not be able to answer the IAEA's questions which may result in the U.S. referring the matter to the UNSC in September. Hamdan noted that he had discussed the UAE's concerns with IAEA DG Al-Baradei, urging a clear international message. Bolton said he had encouraged Al-Baradei to just "report the facts and refrain from political spin," can send the wrong message to Iran.

UAE BELIEVES IRAN IS STEPPING UP NUCLEAR PROGRAM

¶10. (S) Hamdan said the UAE was deeply concerned about Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile programs. According to UAE intelligence, the Iranians have recently redoubled their efforts and are "working more actively" on a nuclear program, particularly following U.S. and European expressions of concern. Hamdan pleaded "don't let Iran have this capability as this will be a disaster for the region." The UAE welcomed broader cooperation on Iran, particularly with the Russians and Europeans, who in Hamdan's words "need to be with us." The UAE had raised its concerns about Iranian-Russian cooperation with the GOR directly. The UAE did not buy Moscow's argument that the Iranians are not pursuing this technology for military purposes. Hamdan estimated there was "no way for Russia to control the Iranians." He noted that the GCC Foreign Ministers' meeting held earlier in the week in Jeddah issued for the first time a clear statement -- aimed directly at Iran -- calling for a Gulf/Middle East region free of WMD. The GCC was worried about the internal situation in Iran; Saudi FM Saud Al-Faisal had shared his view that Khatami and Rafsanjani, who usually differ widely on issues, have come together and are now singing the "same tune."

¶11. (S) U/S Bolton said there was "no doubt" about the Iranian/Russian linkage. While it was clear Putin doesn't want to see a nuclear-equipped Iran, his desires don't seem to be penetrating down through the GOR bureaucracy. Bolton noted the inherent conflict of interest in the Russian Atomic Energy Agency which on the one hand fully understands the Iranian threat but on the other desires to sell reactors and fuel for profit. As for the North Koreans, who were subject to a ballistic missile test moratorium, the U.S. believes they have an agreement with Iran to share data on Iran's ballistic missile tests. Bolton hoped that the GCC would convey its concerns to Russia and the Europeans.

¶12. (U) This cable has been cleared by U/S Bolton.

WAHBA